

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

COMPLETE LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-36 : (Canceled)

Claim 37 : (New) A method of processing a substance, comprising the steps of: continuously compressing the substance together with carbon dioxide to produce a fluid of supercritical or subcritical state; and extracting, mixing and/or modifying the fluid at a maximum flow rate during processing of 10 to 1500 m/second.

Claim 38 : (New) The method according to claim 37, and processing a composition containing at least one of polysaccharide and protein as a main ingredient in said state, and then heating and compressing the composition to produce a thermoplastic composition.

Claim 39 : (New) The method according to claim 38, wherein said composition contains a thermoplastic resin and/or a plasticizer.

Claim 40 : (New) The method according to claim 38, wherein said polysaccharide is starch or cellulose, and wherein said protein is bean curd lees.

Claim 41 : (New) The method according to claim 38, wherein said composition is processed as said fluid of critical state and, after hydrolyzing by the heating and compressing steps, the composition is dehydratively polycondensed.

Claim 42 : (New) The method according to claim 41, wherein said composition is prepared by adding at least one compound selected from the group consisting of acids and phenols in an amount of 0.01 to 0.5 weight % to the polysaccharide.

Claim 43 : (New) The method according to claim 37, and processing an aromatic polyester as a fluid together with a copolymerizing ingredient for reducing the melting temperature and a branching agent in said state to obtain a foam product containing a branched copolymer.

Claim 44 : (New) A screw equipment with an orifice for continuously compressing a substance together with carbon dioxide to produce a fluid of critical state, and for extracting, mixing and/or modifying the fluid at a maximum flow rate at the orifice during processing.

Claim 45 : (New) The equipment according to claim 44, and an extruding screw, and a raw material supplying part next to the extruding screw, and a vacuum part in which a shaft of said screw of said screw is thin, and a gap of increased volume between screw blades is provided, and carbon dioxide is introduced to the vacuum part, and a compressing part in which the shaft is thick and the gaps of the blades of decreased volume is provided, and a thickness of the shaft is made to be substantially the same as an inner periphery of a barrel, and the orifice is provided on a surface of or surrounding said shaft.

Claim 46 : (New) The equipment according to claim 45, wherein a maximum flow rate of said substance passing through the orifice is 10 to 1500 cm/seconds.

Claim 47 : (New) The equipment according to claim 45, wherein said raw material supplying part consists of twin screws having a ratio of rotation of 1:2, and adjacent paddles being not lower than 60°, and not higher than 180°.

Claim 48 : (New) The equipment according to claim 45, wherein a reversely tapered subscrew is provided next to said orifice and is part of a twin screw structure.

Claim 49 : (New) A thermoplastic composition prepared by the method according to claim 37, which comprises a polysaccharide and contains cellulose or hemicellulose as a main ingredient.

Claim 50 : (New) The thermoplastic composition according to claim 49, containing 0.01 to 3 weight % of mannose ingredient.

Claim 51 : (New) The thermoplastic composition according to claim 49, containing a biodegradable resin.

Claim 52 : (New) The thermoplastic composition according to claim 51, wherein at least a part of the biodegradable resin is an aromatic biodegradable resin.

Claim 53 : (New) The thermoplastic composition according to claim 49, containing at least one plasticizer selected from the group consisting of glycols, glycerols, sorbitol and their mixtures.

Claim 54 : (New) The thermoplastic composition according to claim 51, wherein the biodegradable resin is used in a ratio of 40 to 90 weight %.

Claim 55 : (New) A molding consisting of the thermoplastic composition according to claim 49.

Claim 56 : (New) A thermoplastic composition consisting of starch, and a total amount of nitrogen-containing aromatic component generated and contained in a head space of a 20 ml vial bottle after feeding 10 g of a sample in it, and heating it at 180°C for 1 minute, is lower than 10 ppm.

Claim 57 : (New) The composition according to claim 56, wherein said nitrogen-containing aromatic component is at least one selected from the group consisting of 5-acetyl-2,3-dihydro-1,4-thiazine, 2-acetyl-tetrahydropyridine, 2-propionyl-1-pyrroline, 2-acetyl-1-pyrroline and acetylpyrazine.

Claim 58 : (New) The composition according to claim 56, consisting of a product prepared by a procedure in which at least one compound selected from the group consisting of acids and phenols is added in an amount of 0.01 to 0.5 weight % based on weight of the starch, and the starch is hydrolyzed and then dehydratively polycondensed.

Claim 59 : (New) The composition according to claim 56, which is blended with a thermoplastic resin.

Claim 60 : (New) A molding prepared by using the composition according to claim 56 as a main raw material.

Claim 61 : (New) A bean curd lees composition molding consisting of a composition using a thermoplastic resin and bean curd lees as main raw materials, a total amount of hexanal and hexanol generated and contained in a head space after feeding 5 g of a sample in a 20 ml vial bottle, and heating it at 180°C for 1 minute, is lower than 5 ppm.

Claim 62 : (New) The bean curd lees composition molding according to claim 61, wherein the thermoplastic resin is at least one selected from the group

consisting of polyolefin resin, polystyrene resin, polyamide resin, polyester resin and polyurethane resin.

Claim 63 : (New) The bean curd lees composition molding according to claim 61, wherein the thermoplastic resin is a biodegradable resin.

Claim 64 : (New) A branched polyester copolymer molding which is prepared by reacting (A) polyethylene terephthalate with (B) an aliphatic dialcohol and an aliphatic dicarboxylic acid having a carbon number of 1 to 4 and/or hydroxycarboxylic acid or their polymers in the presence of a branching agent and which has a melting point peak temperature of 120 to 190°C.

Claim 65 : (New) The polyester molding according to claim 64, wherein 5 to 50 parts by weight of the ingredient (B) is mixed with 100 parts by weight of the ingredient (A) for use.

Claim 66 : (New) The polyester molding according to claim 64, wherein said molding is a gas foamed product having an expansion ratio of 4 to 50.

Claim 67 : (New) A polyester foamed molding which is prepared by reacting (A) an aromatic polyester with (B) an aliphatic dialcohol and an aliphatic dicarboxylic acid having a carbon number of 1 to 4 and/or hydroxy-dicarboxylic acid or their polymers in the presence of a branching agent and which has a melting point peak temperature of 150 to 195°C and which is foamed in the presence of photocatalytic titanium dioxide and a thermodegradable foaming agent.

Claim 68 : (New) The foamed molding according to claim 67, wherein the aromatic polyester (A) is polyethylene terephthalate or polybutylene terephthalate.

Claim 69 : (New) The foamed molding according to claim 67, wherein said molding is an injection molded product, beads or an extruded molding.

Claim 70 : (New) A branched polyester elastomer consisting of a hard segment and a soft segment prepared by the method according to claim 37 and its foamed molding.

Claim 71 : (New) A capsule, a wafer, a thickener and a gelled product consisting of a composition according to claim 49.

Claim 72 : (New) The edible capsule, the wafer, the thickener and the gelled product according to claim 71, which is for drugs or foodstuffs.